




March 2009

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Kentucky's State Wildlife Grant competitive process: Action Plan implementation

The State Wildlife Grant Program was created in 2002 in response to the growing need for pro-active wildlife conservation. This program aims to restore declining wildlife populations by protecting and improving terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems.

In 2008, the KDFWR issued a formal request for State Wildlife Grant proposals to engage potential partners in high priority conservation projects. The call for proposals placed an emphasis on implementation and encouraged applicants to submit proposals for hands-on habitat improvement efforts.

In response to KDFWR's request, 25 proposals were submitted requesting a total of \$1,844,000 to fund projects benefiting Kentucky's species and habitats of greatest conservation need. Of these proposals, the following five projects have been accepted for funding, pending approval by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Effects of *Phragmites* Removal on Species of Greatest Conservation Need at Clear Creek Wildlife Management Area

This project will restore 400 acres of wetland habitat for species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) at the Clear Creek Wildlife Management Area,



Removal of invasive reeds will be studied at Clear Creek WMA.

Hopkins County, Kentucky using herbicide management on the invasive common reed, *Phragmites australis*.

Using a variety of techniques, experimental (herbicide treatment) and control plots will be surveyed for the presence and abundance of aquatic and semi-aquatic vertebrate species, both pre- and post-herbicide management. Effects of *Phragmites* treatment on waterfowl will also be assessed.

West Creek Fish Barrier Removal

The purpose of this project is to im-

prove fish passage in West Creek located in Harrison and Robertson counties.

Fish passage will be improved by removing a low-water ford currently used as a county road and constructing a bridge. The low-water ford is located approximately ¾ mile upstream from the confluence of West Creek with the Licking River.

Examples of species of conservation concern that will benefit from this project

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WE GET MAIL

Letters to the Commissioner's Office

Tim Guilfoile wrote:

"Last night, March 5th, Lee McClellan gave the program at the Northern Kentucky Fly Fishers monthly dinner meeting. We had over 80 people attend the meeting and it was one of our largest meetings ever.

Lee was absolutely spectacular. His combination of knowledge and wit simply had everyone captivated and I can tell you that after his presentation, people absolutely swarmed around him with questions and to take advantage of the many materials that he brought to share with our members.

Lee does this incredible job of representing the Department. When Lee talks, it reinforces what a great resource we all have in the people that comprise the Department of Fish & Wildlife Resources.

Northern Kentucky Fly Fishers has over 350 members and is, I believe, the largest fishing club in Kentucky and we are greatly appreciative of the wonderful relationship that we have with the Department and I can tell you that I speak for each and every member.

We here at Northern Kentucky Fly Fishers and the Fifth District Federation want the Commissioners to know that we admire and respect the Department and its leadership and are here to help in any way that we can to support and assist in the achievement of the Mission and Objectives of the Department.

Please know the KDFWR has both our admiration and our support. Thanks to all of you for all that you do."

Sheriff John L. Davis of Graves County wrote:

"During the infamous winter storm of 2009 your agency provided assistance to western Kentucky. My agency was lucky enough to receive help from one of your

employees, Danna Baxley.

I can't thank you enough for her assistance but even more for her willingness to get involved and her attitude. She stayed out in the intense weather and worked alongside other volunteers and never complained. She represented your agency very well."

John P. Russell, President of the West Kentucky Field Trial Club wrote:

"The Region 4 Amateur All Age Championship was successfully conducted on February 19-20, which was remarkable that we were able to have a field trial at all.

The West Kentucky WMA was very severely affected by the recent ice storm, resulting in historic damage. I spent a day a week prior to the scheduled trial to de-

termine if we would be able to hold a trial. The extent of the damage was dramatic. I had no expectation that the WK WMA staff would be able to make much progress at clearing the riding courses especially considering that they had power restored to their own homes only that day and that they were being called on to assist with other recovery efforts.

A week later, when I returned, there was little for me to do. Tim Kreher and his staff had done a remarkable job clearing the riding courses and other damage so that we could hold our trial in a safe manner.

Please convey our most sincere appreciation to the WK WMA staff. The continuing support of the KDFWR for the activities on the WK WMA is greatly appreciated."

McKEE INDUCTED INTO KHEA HALL OF FAME



Bobby McKee was inducted into the Kentucky Hunter Education Association's (KHEA) Hall of Fame during the Annual Hunter Education Instructor Appreciation Banquet on Saturday, January 24, 2009, at Jenny Wiley State Resort Park. McKee, Hunter Training Officer for the Western District, also turned another year older that day.

Pictured left to right: Melinda Driskell, KHEA Vice President Gary Gosser, Bobby McKee and KHEA President Bob Fraley.



Timothy D. Blanford

August 19, 1952 – February 26, 2009

Sloughs Wildlife Management Area wildlife technician **Timothy D. Blanford** lost his battle with lung cancer on February 26th. Tim is survived by his wife Cathy; three daughters Lori, Kimberly and Amy, eight grandchildren, four sisters and nine brothers.

Tim began working at the Sloughs WMA on April 16, 2001. Tim was a tremendous asset to the area as he brought an extensive knowledge of farming and equipment maintenance to the area.

He told friends that he enjoyed what he called “farming without a purpose”; because if it made a good crop everything benefited and if it didn’t, you still didn’t have to sell the crop.

The Sloughs staff felt Tim enjoyed his time at the Sloughs WMA; he will truly be missed by all who knew him. He always had a smile on his face and a story to tell.

March promotions

Tony Black has been selected as the new Purchase Region regional coordinator.

Tony graduated from Murray State University in 1997 with a Bachelor of Science in Wildlife Biology and is a member and certified Wildlife Biologist through The Wildlife Society.

Tony worked as a Camp counselor at Camp Currie seasonally from 1992-96. He has worked for the Wildlife Division since 1998 in various capacities from Fish and Wildlife Technician, Fish and Wildlife Management Foreman on several areas in the Purchase Region from 1998 through 2003 and as a Private Lands Biologist with the Purchase Region since 2003.

Scott Harp has been selected as the new Green River Region regional coordinator.

Scott graduated from Eastern Kentucky University in 1999 with a Bachelor

of Science in Wildlife Biology and obtained his M.S. in 2003.

Scott is a member and certified Wildlife Biologist through The Wildlife Society.

He has worked for KDFWR in the Wildlife Division since 2002 as a Private Lands Biologist for the Green River Region.

Freddie Adkins has been promoted to Game Management Foreman for Peabody WMA.

Freddie is a 20-year veteran of KDFWR. He began his career as a seasonal employee in the old Rumsey regional office working on current WMAs and assisting the District Biologist.

Fred was assigned to Peabody WMA following the acquisition of that property in 1996.

In 2005 he was promoted to the title of Technician Supervisor, and has been filling the role of Game Management

Foreman since the retirement of Jack Bell in October of 2008.

Robert Colvis has been promoted to Wildlife Biologist IV effective March 15 and is now responsible for the Ballard and Boatwright WMAs in the Purchase Region.

Robert graduated from Southern Illinois University in 1993 with a Bachelor of Science in Zoology and a minor in Plant Biology.

Past work history includes the California Waterfowl Association, Ducks Unlimited, Illinois DNR, and as a high school teaching assistant.

Robert has been with the KDFWR since February of 1999 as a Fish and Wildlife Management Foreman at the Ballard Wildlife Management Area.

Congratulations to Tony, Scott, Freddie and Robert. Best of luck to them in their new positions!

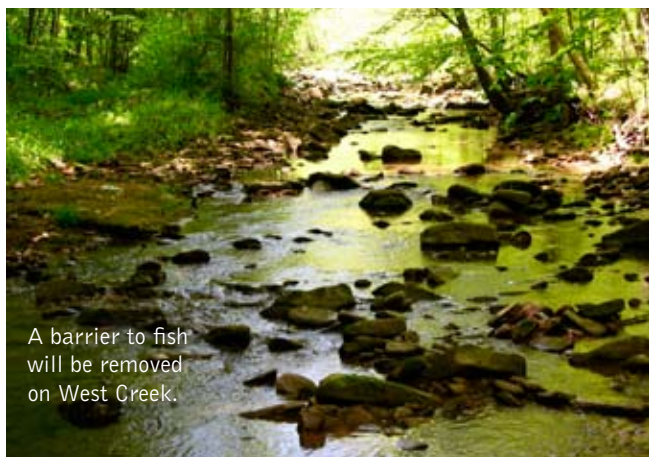
ARCHERY DEMONSTRATION

Local middle school students from Bondurant and Westridge gave a National Archery in the Schools demonstration for the Fish and Wildlife Commission this month and then invited the members to shoot with them. At right, McKenzie Jones worked with 6th District Commission Member Steve Glenn and below, Carly Hedden worked with 8th District Member Rick Storm.



A NEW CAPTAIN

Mike Fields became Law Enforcement Division's newest captain last week when Commissioner Gassett and Colonel Bob Milligan made the promotion official with a set of captain's bars for the collar. Capt. Fields is based at Headquarters and will oversee the division's training, boating and communications.



A barrier to fish will be removed on West Creek.



Eastern hellbender populations will be surveyed.

“SWG,” continued

include two fishes (Northern Madtom and Spotted Darter) and 18 mussel species (e.g. Fanshell, Elktoe, Catspaw, Snuffbox, Northern Riffleshell).

By removing this structure, fish composition and abundance should improve, and we should see an increase in available habitat for spawning and refuge.

Student Conservation Association Invasive Species Eradication Team

The Student Conservation Association Native Plant Corps will work for 16 weeks in Kentucky implementing control of invasive and exotic species on both public and private lands.

Working closely with Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife, and other project partners, the Student Conservation Association will identify specific locations

within the Priority Conservation Area encompassing the Mammoth Cave Region of Kentucky.

This project will focus on the removal of woody species from barren/glade habitats, as well as removal of invasive species such as bush honeysuckle, autumn olive, tree of heaven and multi-flora rose.

Impacts of Stream Mitigation on Kentucky Crayfish in the East Fork Little Sandy River and the Conservation Status of two Kentucky Species: *Cambarus veteranus* and *Cambarus parvoculus*

A special investigation of East Fork Little Sandy River in Lawrence County, associated with projects funded through FILO moneys, will be conducted.

Specifically, pre- and post- stream restoration monitoring of FILO sites will

be conducted to determine project effects on resident crayfish populations.

Additionally, the Kentucky conservation status of the nearby *Cambarus veteranus* and southern *Cambarus parvoculus* will be investigated.

Status Assessment and Conservation of the Eastern Hellbender

The goal of this project is to expand the current status assessment of the Eastern Hellbender (*Cryptobranchus alleganiensis*) to include all historical locality records statewide.

Outside of the Licking and Kentucky River watersheds (areas currently being surveyed), a total of 38 historical localities for the Eastern Hellbender have been identified.

This includes all of the sites identified as priorities by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources. Surveys for hellbenders will be conducted using a combination of visual encounter surveys, skin diving, and trapping.

If you would like more information regarding these projects, or if you have ideas for future State Wildlife Grant projects, please contact Danna Baxley, State Wildlife Grant Coordinator (502-564-3400 ext. 4521).



Barren and glade habitats will be targeted for invasive plant removal.



Effects of stream restoration projects on crayfish in the East Fork Little Sandy River will be studied.

Study to answer if stocked crappie can improve Kentucky/Barkley Lake populations

It should be no surprise that crappie are a primary sportfish in Kentucky. In fact, crappie ranks a close second to black bass in terms of popularity in Kentucky and Barkley lakes, two of Kentucky's largest reservoirs.

During the spring, these areas come alive with anglers who are looking to catch the first big bite of the year. This is not just a local craze, as boat ramps begin to fill up with vehicles from states all around Kentucky and beyond. This flood of anglers is pretty much guaranteed from year to year even if the crappie fishing is not so consistent.

Crappie populations tend to run in cycles. Some years there are good spawns, while in other years they just do not live up to their potential. This happens for a number of reasons, including water level fluctuations, unfavorable weather conditions, and a lack of suitable spawning habitat.

In the case of Kentucky and Barkley lakes, weather conditions and inconsistent water levels a couple of years ago resulted in poor spawns of white crappie, which means lower numbers of harvestable size fish today.

This was anticipated by the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources (KDFWR), who reduced the creel limit from 30 to 20 fish in 2008. But this may not be enough to fully protect the white crappie population and keep anglers coming back for more.

In Kentucky, stocking is always an



Western Fishery District technician Terry Yarbrough holds a slab black crappie from Kentucky Lake. Black crappie numbers have increased dramatically during the past 10 years at Kentucky Lake, while numbers of white crappie have unfortunately declined.

option when a sportfish population needs a boost. It happens with several different species from largemouth bass to catfish, but has never been done for white crappie.

Other states including Tennessee and Alabama have stocked crappie with either excellent or marginal success. Because there is a chance for success and the high demand for more stable crappie populations, the KDFWR fisheries division will be starting a new research project on white crappie stocking in the Commonwealth.

Currently, biologists are collecting adult white crappie from various areas around the state, including Kentucky, Barkley, Taylorsville, and Green River lakes, which will be used at Minor Clark Fish Hatchery as brood stock.

These adults should spawn this spring in hatchery ponds and produce enough 3-inch white crappie fingerlings by November to stock four different lakes in Ken-

tucky. Carr Creek, Taylorsville, Barkley (Little River embayment), and Kentucky (Blood River embayment) lakes are all slated to receive white crappie fingerlings at a rate of 10 fish/acre.

These fish will be marked prior to being stocked so that they can be separated from the natural white crappie on down the road. The lakes will be stocked in the same way for three consecutive years and then monitored to see how they contribute to the natural population and more importantly, what contribution they make to the anglers' catch.

The overall goal is to determine if poor year classes of white crappie can be successfully offset by supplemental stocking. And if we can develop this capability, then we may be able to use it as a tool to keep anglers on fish, regardless of whether or not the lake and Mother Nature decide to cooperate.

FINS program gears up for 2009



A memorable channel catfish caught by two Frankfort girls from the upper Sportsman's Lake. Channel catfish are stocked as part of the FINS program.



Memorable fish like this have to be kissed for the camera before being released.

Spring is just around the corner, so that means fishing season is almost here!

KDFWR will be stocking catchable-sized fish for the FINS (Fishing in Neighborhoods) program.

Started in 2006, this program provides good fishing opportunities close to home for those living in large cities. A total of six lakes in four counties will be stocked over the upcoming months.

Upper Sportsman's Lake will be

stocked with 1,400 catfish March 10. Tom Wallace, Waverly, and Miles #4 Lake in Jefferson County will be stocked with anywhere from 600-1,000 catfish March 11.

Middleton-Mills Lake, located in Kenton County and Stein Lake, located in Campbell County will be stocked with 200 and 1,200 catfish March 12. All six lakes will be stocked with trout in either March or April.

Catfish, as well as sunfish, will be

stocked two more times in April and May.

This program would not be possible without the partnership of our lake owners including Kenton County Parks and Recreation, City of Alexandria, and Louisville Metro Parks.

Good luck fishing!

For more information on the FINS program, please contact Kathryn Emme (502) 564-3400 ext. 4480.

Three fined \$8,600 for poaching deer and turkey

Two Graves County men and a Tennessee man paid more than \$8,600 in fines, restitution and court costs and lost hunting privileges for 22 total years after pleading guilty to 36 counts of illegally taking and failure to tag deer and turkey Wednesday, February 25, in Graves District Court.

Dennis Taylor, 47, and Josh Faircloth, 22, both of Fulton, and Chase Taylor, 23, of Palmersville, Tennessee and a former Graves County resident, were charged by conservation officers Greg Youree and

Denny Broyles after their November 2008 investigation indicated that the three men were responsible for taking as many as 100 illegal deer and 50 wild turkeys in Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri and Iowa over the past six years.

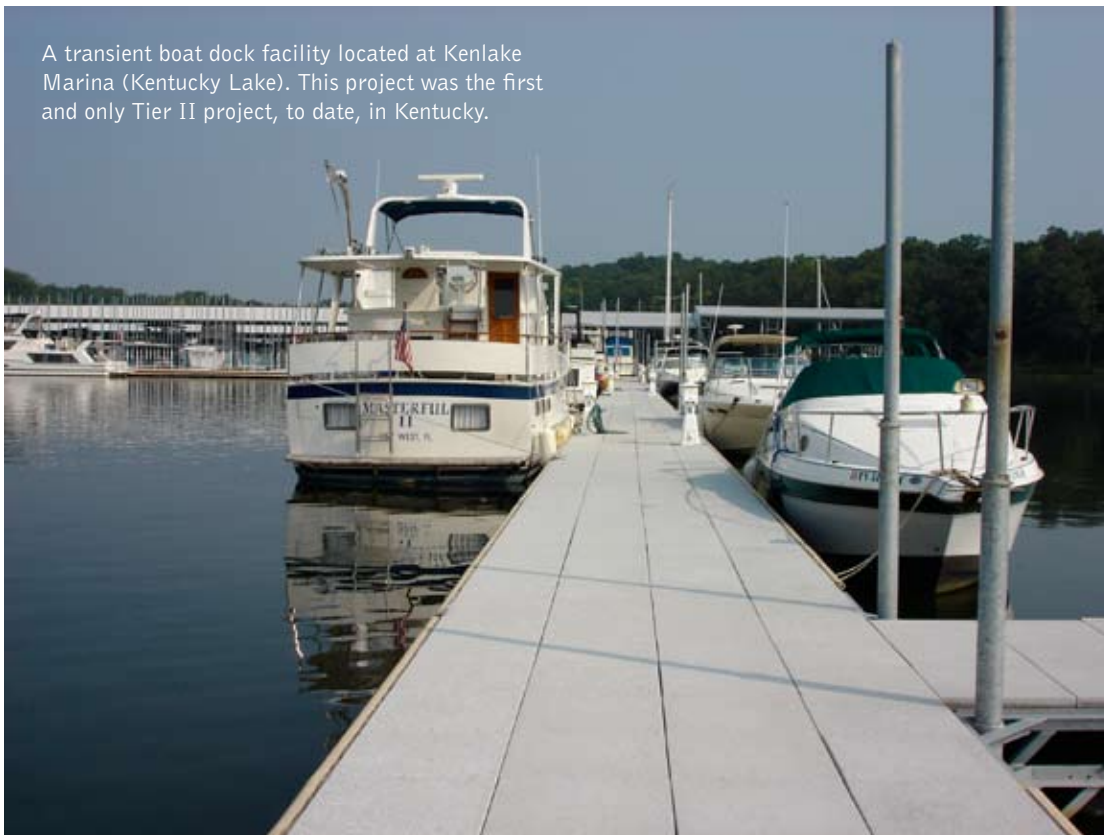
Youree and Broyles, acting on a tip, watched the three men for more than a week in November and then found them with six illegal deer and some commercial processing equipment at Dennis Taylor's residence. Later at Chase Taylor's residence, they discovered 42 longbeards and 46 spurs.

During the subsequent investigation the officers received statements tying them to illegal kills in Kentucky and the three other states over six years.

Faircloth, Dennis Taylor's stepson, pleaded guilty to four counts of illegally taking deer and four counts illegally killing turkey. Graves District Judge Deborah Hawkins Crooks sentenced him according to the plea agreement and ordered him to pay \$1,784 in fines, restitution and court

See "Poachers," page 9

A transient boat dock facility located at Kenlake Marina (Kentucky Lake). This project was the first and only Tier II project, to date, in Kentucky.



Next round of Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Fund awarded

The Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources is proud to acknowledge that Buzzard Rock Marina, located on the northern portion of Lake Barkley, was recently awarded a Boating Infrastructure Grant Program (BIG-P) grant to expand its existing transient boat dock facility in order to accommodate increased demand.

Buzzard Rock Marina will construct a transient dock (12' x 80') expansion onto their existing dock structure that will accommodate an additional four transient vessels, in addition to replacing the existing dock substrate with new concrete substrate.

The BIG-P was established by Congress through the Sport Fishing

and Boating Safety Act of 1998. BIG-P provides federal funding assistance for the installation, construction, and maintenance of short-term dockage (less than 10 days) for transient, nontrailerable recreational vessels that are 26 feet or greater in length on navigable waters.

Navigable waters in the Commonwealth of Kentucky include the Mississippi River, Ohio River, Kentucky Lake (Tennessee River), Lake Barkley (Cumberland River), and Lake Cumberland.

Other activities that are considered allowable under the BIG-P include the installation of mooring buoys, navigational aids, floating or fixed breakwaters, floating restrooms, retaining walls, bulkheads, dockside utilities, recycling and trash

receptacles, electricity, water supplies, and pay telephones.

Facilities that are constructed or maintained with BIG-P funds must be maintained for a minimum of 20 years. Any fees charged by the marina to utilize these facilities must be equitable, based upon the prevailing rate in the area and must go back into the maintenance of the facility.

BIG-P is comprised of either Tier I or II funding. Annually, the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources receives up to \$100,000 in Tier I federal funds to be utilized on projects. Traditionally, this money is distributed to one or two marinas to help construct transient dock facilities. Approved projects are funded with 75 percent federal funds, with the approved marina providing the remaining 25 percent match.

Marinas desiring to submit project proposals that exceed \$100,000 in federal funds may apply for Tier II funding. Tier II funding has no set dollar limit and is awarded on a nationally competitive basis. Typically, marinas seeking Tier II funding must provide a minimum of 50 percent match in order to remain nationally competitive.

To date, the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife Resources has provided \$1,160,838 in BIG-P federal funds to participating marinas throughout Kentucky. A total of 13 transient dock facilities have been constructed and four dock facilities have been renovated or improved. Three projects are still pending completion.

Smallmouth bass stocking project at Paintsville Lake

In 1984, Paintsville Lake was created by the impoundment of Paint Creek in eastern Kentucky.

Although a small population of largemouth, smallmouth and spotted bass were present in Paint Creek prior to impoundment, smallmouth bass were stocked in the lake from 1984-1986 and 1988-1990. The stocked fish were offspring of smallmouth broodstock collected from Dale Hollow Lake.

Largemouth bass were also stocked in the lake in 1991 and 1992. From electrofishing and creel survey data, the smallmouth bass population never grew into a significant fishery, however, the largemouth bass population did.

A study was developed in 2002 to understand what was holding the smallmouth bass population back. In addition to the collection of annual electrofishing and creel data, a statewide smallmouth bass genetics study and a review of water quality parameters was also conducted.

A review of water quality parameters showed an absence of summer, cool water habitat for smallmouth bass. Discussions between the U.S. Army Corps and KDFWR led to a change in the water release regime at Paintsville Lake.

In the past, water releases into the tailwater below Paintsville Lake came from a mid to deep water gate in order to provide cold water for an existing tailwater trout population. This release adversely affected the amount of summer, cool water habitat within the reservoir.



Eastern Fishery District Program Coordinator Kevin Frey holds a dandy of a smallmouth bass collected during a nocturnal electrofishing sample.

It is believed that this lack of cool, oxygenated water habitat during summer prevented the establishment of the smallmouth bass population in Paintsville Lake.

Water releases now come from a surface gate mixed with a deep water gate and provide approximately 68 degree water to the tailwater while maintaining adequate summer, cool water habitat for smallmouth bass along with trout and walleye.

The genetics of smallmouth bass from Paintsville Lake and other bodies of water around the state were examined in 2003 and 2004. Fish from Paintsville Lake were found to be most similar to fish from water bodies in the Big Sandy River watershed; in particular, the Levisa Fork River drainage.

Based on the improved summer, cool water habitat and genetic makeup of the existing smallmouth bass at Paintsville Lake, a renewed attempt at establishing a viable smallmouth bass fishery has begun.

Fishtrap Lake is being used to collect smallmouth bass broodstock in 2008 and 2009. These fish will be spawned at the Minor Clark Fish Hatchery in 2009 and their offspring will be stocked into Paintsville Lake. 2009 will be the first of a three year stocking program at Paintsville Lake.

If everything goes well, the KDFWR Fisheries Division hopes Paintsville Lake will eventually end up on the "new up and comers" list for smallmouth bass in the Fishing Forecast.

"Poachers," continued

costs, seized his rifle, and stripped him of hunting privileges for five years.

Chase Taylor, Denis Taylor's nephew, pleaded guilty to four counts of illegally killing deer and four counts failure to tag deer. He was ordered to pay \$3,534

in fines, restitution and costs, stripped of hunting privileges for 10 years, a rifle and a shotgun, hunting clothes and rain gear, a knife and cell phone, Judge Crooks allowed him to purchase his Chevy pickup back for \$500.

Dennis Taylor pleaded guilty to six counts of illegally taking deer and four

counts of failing to tag deer. Crooks ordered him to pay \$3,284, stripped him of hunting privileges for seven years, seized a rifle and bow, and then permitted him to buy his ATV back for \$500.

Crooks ordered Faircloth and Chase Taylor to attend hunter education classes as well.